

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the Office Action are respectfully requested in view of this amendment and the following reasons. By this amendment, claims 1 and 3 have been amended, claim 2 has been canceled, and new claims 22 and 23 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9-20, 22 and 23 are pending in this application. The cancellation of claim 2 is made without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claim 2, which the Examiner considers allowable. Claim 3 has been amended to make proper reference to claim 1, rather than to canceled claim 2. New claims 22 and 23 recite the allowable subject matter of previous claims 9 and 10, respectively. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the above amendments introduce no new matter within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §132.

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because it (a) places the application in *prima facie* condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise new issues requiring further search and/or consideration by the Examiner because similar subject matter was previously considered by the Examiner and thus further consideration and/or search by the Examiner is not warranted; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. For at least these reasons, entry of the present Amendment is therefore respectfully requested. Accordingly, Applicant requests reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections for the reasons discussed below.

***Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102***

Claims 1, 7, 11-13, 16, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,072,376 issued to Shannon ("Shannon").

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable features of claim 2 and thus is allowable for at least this reason. Claims 7, 11-13, 16, and 20 depend from claim 1 and thus are allowable for at least this reason.

In addition, new claims 22 and 23 include the allowable subject matter of previous claims 9 and 10, respectively, and thus are allowable for at least this reason.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection of claims 1, 7, 11-13, 16, and 20. Since none of the other prior art of record discloses or suggests all the features of the claimed subject matter, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1, and all the claims that depend therefrom, are allowable.

***Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103***

Claims 17-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Shannon in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,658,158 issued to Milan.

Claims 17-19 depend from allowable claim 1, as amended, and thus are allowable for at least this reason. For the reasons noted above with regard to the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection, new claims 22 and 23 are allowable because they respectively inherit the allowable features from previous claims 9 and 10. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 17-19.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 2-4, 9, 10, 14, and 15 contain allowable subject matter. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable features of claim 2 and claims 3, 4, 7, and 9-20 depend from claim 1. In addition, new claims 22 and 23 contain the allowable subject matter of claims 9 and 10, respectively. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9-20, 22, and 23 are in condition for allowance.

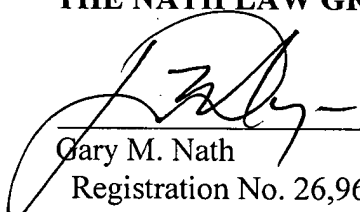
**CONCLUSION**

Applicant believes that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submits that all of the stated grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,  
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